

Message Text

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14

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 ACDA-05 AID-05 OMB-01 /098 W

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R 270801Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5021

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 0194

E.O. 11652: XGDS(1)

TAGS: PFOR PBOR MR SS UR

SUBJECT: SAHARA WATCH: COMMENTS BY SOVIET DIPLOMAT

REF: RABAT 0375

1. IN JANUARY 25 CONVERSATION WITH DCM, SOVIET COUNSELOR OF EMBASSY IVAN DROUJININE, MADE CONCERTED EFFORT TO SWITCH DISCUSSION AWAY FROM WESTERN SAHARA. WHEN EMBOFF COMMENTED THAT MAURITANIANS HAD JUST LOST 'AIN BEN TILI TO POLISARIO AND WERE ENCOUNTERING INCREASING PRESSURE ON BIR MOGHREIN, DROUJININE COUNTERED THAT MOROCCANS AND MAURITANIANS SEEMED TO HAVE EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL. HE ASSERTED HIS MAIN SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON SUBJECT COMES FROM RADIO ALGIERS AND PROFESSED NOT TO BE CURRENT ON SAHARAN DEVELOPMENTS.

2. COMMENT: DROUJININE'S REACTION WAS CURIOUS FOR SEVERAL REASONS. ON PAST OCCASIONS, HE HAS BEEN ANXIOUS TO DISCUSS POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING MAURITANIA. HE AL-

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MOST CERTAINLY KNOWS THAT MAURITANIANS ARE UNDER

SUBSTANTIAL PRESSURE IN NORTH, IN SPITE OF HIS PRO-
FESSION TO CONTRARY. AND IN EVENT HE HAD NOT YET HEARD
OF FALL OF 'AIN BEN TILI, HE SHOWED, UNCHARACTERISTICAL-
LY, NO INTEREST IN FOLLOWING UP ON EMBOFF KNOWLEDGE
OF SUBJECT. WE WONDER IF SOVIET EMBASSY PERSONNEL HERE OR
ALL AROUND SAHARA CIRCUIT MAY HAVE BEEN TOLD TO AVOID ANYTHING
OTHER THAN PERFUNCTORY DISCUSSION OF SAHARA SITUATION.HANDYSIDE

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